

to implement this approach and preserve and protect natural areas and beautiful vistas that contribute to the unique character of the city. Today, 32 percent of its land is open space and green space and the town has created more than 83 miles of multi-use trails.

Westminster's first 100 years are rich in history with monumental milestones that have made it the community it is today. I want to congratulate the city of Westminster as it celebrates its centennial anniversary. I look forward to helping Westminster continue to thrive as it sets out to make history in the next 100 years.●

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF OGLALA LAKOTA COLLEGE

● Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I wish to speak today to honor the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Oglala Lakota College. In a society where education has been the cornerstone for generations, the Oglala Lakota College has been providing students with a high quality education in Indian Country for decades. Graduates have gone on to be extraordinary community and professional leaders working to improve the lives of all those around them.

The Oglala Lakota College, headquartered in Kyle, SD, first opened its doors in 1971 with the goal of bringing hope to the people on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation—home of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. This small college was a great risk when it began, as it was one of the first tribally owned and operated colleges in the United States, but the founders believed in the importance of bringing education to Indian country. Although the name of the school has changed, throughout the years the idea that the benefit of higher education is of vital importance to the community has stayed constant. Since its inception, the Oglala Lakota College has expanded course offerings to establish online courses and satellite classes, providing easier accessibility to students.

From the very beginning, the Oglala Lakota College faced challenges: The faculty and students worked and studied in old building basements, worked around kitchen tables, and used old trailers as makeshift classrooms. The college finally moved to a group of government surplus buildings. Despite an environment ill-suited for education, the students and professors triumphed under the challenging circumstances, and today provide hope for the future of the students.

In 1991, after years of educators striving to provide an education in a difficult learning environment, the school began a 10-year capital campaign to construct new buildings for the students.

In 2005 and 2009, the Oglala Lakota College received grants from the Labor, Health Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee to assist funding recruit-

ment, curriculum development, and program infrastructure for the nursing degree offered by the Oglala Lakota College. More than 40 percent of graduates work at Indian Health Services hospitals, making the Oglala Lakota College the primary tribal college producer of health care providers for the Indian Health Service. In addition, in the past decade, Oglala Lakota College has received several grants to improve the learning environment on its campuses.

The Oglala Lakota College has grown considerably since starting as a small community college. Today it is a thriving campus offering baccalaureate degrees—including a master's degree in Lakota leadership. Under the guidance of my good friend, President Tom Shortbull, the Oglala Lakota College increased its enrollment to 1,400 students, a record number of students focusing on their goal to further their education.

I congratulate the great legacy and triumphs over adversity of the Oglala Lakota College on the occasion of its 40th anniversary and commend the work and commitment, past and present, of the administrators, faculty, alumni and students. I wish them well in the upcoming year of observances and celebrations.●

REMEMBERING JUDGE M. BLANE MICHAEL

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a West Virginian who was an exacting and thoughtful judge, a committed father, and a treasured friend. Blane Michael, a Federal judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, passed away over the weekend.

There are some people whose lives transcend biographies and are so richly varied and important that trying to capture their essence in a few brief remarks is impossible. Blane Michael was that kind of person. And although I am unlikely to do his life justice with these short remarks, I felt it was important for the Senate to hear about this great individual.

Honest and humble to his core, Blane committed himself to public service. Born February 17, 1943, in Charleston, SC, he grew up on a pastoral farm in Grant County, WV—a quiet spot tucked away in the mountains of the State that he left for the first time when he went to law school.

A 1965 graduate of West Virginia University and a 1968 graduate of New York University School of Law, Blane worked for a time at a New York law firm, and then as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York. But like many young people who have left our State to pursue education, employment or other opportunities, he heard the call to return home and give back to his State, and the people who helped form his foundation for public service.

In 1972, he returned to West Virginia with his glorious wife Mary Anne, who

grew up in Shinnston, WV. After working as a special assistant U.S. attorney for the Northern District of West Virginia and later opening a private practice, his path first crossed mine—and my life is forever better because of it.

From 1977 to 1980, Blane served as special counsel during my first term as Governor of West Virginia. He was a young lawyer at the time, in his early thirties, but he was intelligent, ethical, and extraordinarily hardworking. Most importantly, he understood the importance of using his legal skills in service to, and for the betterment of, his fellow citizens. During those years, I came to know quickly that his sight was transfixed on the common good—and for that reason, his judgment and wisdom were something I valued immensely and sought out often, well beyond my years as Governor.

In 1981, Blane returned to private practice where he continued to solidify his reputation as a skilled lawyer and a person of intellectual and moral depth. I was fortunate during that time that he was willing to serve as manager for two of my campaigns for United States Senate. Always true to his work ethic, he continued to maintain a full-time legal practice while performing campaign duties during his lunch breaks and on the weekends.

He was nominated by President Bill Clinton for a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit on August 6, 1993, and was confirmed by the Senate on September 30, 1993. As an appeals court judge, he later said that he was lucky to have the one job he had wanted from the time he was a young attorney.

During his 17 years on the Federal bench, he was a formidable presence whose record of service speaks to who he was as a person—tough when he had to be, and always fair and honest. With a moral and intellectual compass set hard for justice, Blane was a brilliant judge who never took for granted the power and the responsibility of deciding the cases that impacted people's lives. Time and again, he spoke for those without a voice and protected the rights that we as Americans hold so dear.

He artfully interwove the complexity of the law with the practical results of his decisions always taking cases at their face value. And, when the issue required it, Blane acted as a counterweight to some of the most conservative judges in the country—judges who also would come to respect and admire him and, on certain cases that called for righting serious wrongs, join him.

Blane Michael's death is a tremendous loss to our Nation, our State, and anyone whose life he touched. For me, his was the kind of deep, easy companionship that helps sustain you and remains with you always.

His contributions were immense, his dedication to justice and doing what is right was unmatched, and for that, he will be sorely missed. My prayers are